

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

BNVS Transport LLC and MEIN & MEEN
TRUCKING, INC., individually and on behalf of
all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

C&K TRUCKING, LLC,

Defendants.

Case No. 1:20-CV-04305

HON. JOHN ROBERT BLAKEY

HON. M. DAVID WEISMAN

DATE: February 15, 2023

TIME: 11:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Courtroom 1203

219 South Dearborn Street

Chicago, IL 60604

JUDGE: Hon. John Robert Blakey

[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING PLAINTIFFS'
MOTION FOR SERVICE AWARDS

Before the Court is Plaintiffs BNVS Transport LLC's and Mein & Meen Trucking, Inc.'s ("Plaintiffs") Motion for Service Awards. The matter was heard by this Court on February 15, 2023, in Courtroom 1203 of the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, located at 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 95814. Having considered the Motion, the briefing in support of the Motion, the declarations submitted in support, relevant legal authority, the record in this case, and the argument of Counsel, the Court finds as follows:

1. The purpose of service awards is to encourage individual plaintiffs to undertake the responsibility of representative lawsuits. *See, e.g., Galloway v. Williams*, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 238950, at *55-56 (E.D. Va. Dec. 18, 2010) ("Courts routinely grant service awards to compensate named plaintiffs for the services they provided and the risks they incurred during the course of class action litigation.") (citation omitted); *T.K. v. Bytedance Tech. Co.*, 2022 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 65322, at *71 (N.D. Ill. Mar. 25, 2022) (recognizing that "[b]ecause a named plaintiff is an essential ingredient of any class action, courts will deem a service award appropriate if it is necessary to induce an individual to participate in the suit.") (alterations and citations omitted).

2. Relevant factors in evaluating a request for service awards include (1) the time and effort a class representative expended in pursuing the litigation; (2) the actions the class representative took to protect the class's interests; and (3) the degree to which the class has benefitted from those actions. *Cook v. Niedert*, 142 F.3d 1004, 1016 (7th Cir. 1998).

3. Upon application of these factors to the litigation and involvement by Class Representatives Valinda Stephens, Bernard Shurn, and Damien Muhammad, the requested service award of \$20,000 per class representative is reasonable and warranted.

4. The Class Representatives' diligent efforts significantly benefitted the members of the Classes by contributing to a \$3,350,000 total settlement, which will bring substantial monetary

relief to class members. *See* Declaration of Joshua G. Konecky in Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class action Settlement at ¶¶ 19-32 (ECF 70-1).

5. Ms. Stephens and Messrs. Shurn and Muhammad also faced financial and reputational risks by participating in this litigation. They lent their names to this case and thus subjected themselves to public attention and the risk that future business and employment opportunities would be hampered.

6. In light of all the above, the requested service awards of \$20,000 per class representative are reasonable and warranted and should be paid to Ms. Stephens and Messrs. Shurn and Muhammad out of the Gross Settlement Amount. Ms. Stephens and Messrs. Shurn and Muhammad provided important assistance during the pendency of this action, devoted significant time and effort to bringing about this result, risked personal difficulties, and vigorously represented the Classes' interests.

7. Accordingly the Court GRANTS service awards in the amount of \$20,000 each to Valinda Stephens, Bernard Shurn, and Damien Muhammad, to be distributed in conformity with the timeline and procedures set forth in the class action settlement agreement.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated:

The Honorable John R. Blakey
United States District Judge